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Use and Awareness of E-resources among Research Scholars of Literature Subjects in Banaras Hindu University

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Use and Awareness of E-resources among Research Scholars of Literature subjects in Banaras Hindu University

1. Introduction

The speedy advancement of Information Communication and Technology (ICT) has brought revolutionary changes in information handling and provides various choices to handle varied data sources, handily and effortlessly. As a result, e-resources became the foremost for modern library's reserves in satisfying students, teachers, and researchers' varied information needs with minimum time. The use of computers has changed libraries' working and has become an essential tool for retrieving information. Electronic resources are a significant portion of library collections nowadays. The worth and use of information resources, considerably e-resources, have increased with time. Online sources have a significant role in science and technology in comparison to social science and humanities subjects. There are not many online sources available in language and literature, and those available are scattered. Therefore, there is a necessity to study the use and awareness of e-resources of language and literature subjects. The initial study deals with users' utilization of resources, further consideration by the research scholars. The current study is an endeavor to analyze the awareness and utilization of e-resources by the research scholars of the Faculty of Arts, Banaras Hindu University, and find out the problems and constraints the users face in accessing the e-resources with some purposeful suggestions for its improvement.

1.1. Background of the study

Traditional libraries have remodeled into digital and virtual libraries where physical forms of books, journals, and magazines have changed into e-books, e-journals, and e-magazines. This also has exaggerated the world dissemination of information (Abinew & Vuda, 2013). Electronic resources like e-journals, e-books, e-databases, internet resources are simply accessible at any location by using electronic devices. Jone (2008) mentioned that e-resources solve storage issues and manage the flood of information systematically. E-resources can be defined as the electronic representation of information accessed via electronic devices and over a network (Johnson et al., 2012). Nowadays, e-resources have become essential sources for the educational community. Therefore, awareness of these resources among the academic community is predominantly crucial to library development (Egberongbe, 2011).

Awareness is the state of knowledge concerning something that exists or understanding of a state of affairs or subject at the current time based on information or expertise (Ani & Ahiauzu, 2008). It can also be seen as knowledge or perception of a situation, facts, recognition, consciousness, realization, and acknowledgment concerning and intelligent interest or familiarity during an explicit state of affairs or development. Awareness and use of e-resources are essential; therefore, to keep users alert of the available media, they can access the required information. The use of e-resources required special skills of ICTs, which facilitate users to navigate the maze of resources at their devices (Balogun, 2008).

Therefore, awareness is a significant feature to utilise e-resources. Thanuskodi and Ravi (2011) surveyed the use of electronic resources by faculty members and research scholars of Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli. The result shows that 67.14% of the faculty is acquainted with the utilization of e-resources. Prangya and Rabindra (2013) opined that awareness is the core skill for the usage of e-resources. The popularity and usability of open access online sources (not subscription-based) are higher than paid sources. Waldman (2003) conducted a study and found very high usage of the library's OPAC at the City University of New York. Gakibayo (2001) conducted a study on Internet usage by students and teachers at Mbarara University of Science and Technology, and the results of the study indicated low usage of e-resources. The reason behind low usage was a lack of information searching and accessing capability. Another study was conducted by Brennan et al. (2002) to adopt e-resources behavior among faculty members. They found that e-resources have affected teachers' information-seeking behavior and discovered that academics make fewer visits to the library and prefer e-resources over print documents.

Watt and Ibegbulam (2005) stress that utilizing e-resources depends on the user's ability to navigate the maze of e-resources obtainable via devices. There is a need to equip end-users with skills like info acquisition skills, info retrieval skills, and laptop skills, among others, to market e-resource usage (Egberongbe, 2011). Tyagi (2011) said that the power to use e-resources expeditiously depends on necessary laptop skills, data of what is obtainable and the way to use it, and talent to outline a groundwork drawback. However, students attain on top of skills and data depends on several factors, like their disciplines, tutorial standing, ranks, age, and access. To any buttress, Prangya and Rabindra (2013) conclude that lack of training, poor infrastructure, and high value of accessing some e-resources are the obstacles to correct and full utilization of EIRs. Makkini & Reddy (2014) conducted a study on the use of e-journals by the research scholars of Sri Venkateswara University (SVU), Andhra University (AU), and the University of Hyderabad (UH). The study was aimed to find the type of e-journals used, the purpose of use, time spent for accessing, problems faced in accessing e-journals, methods used for accessing. The authors were trying to find out the users' satisfaction levels with print and e-journals. They found that scholars prefer e-journals over print journals.

It is pertinent to note that when research scholars are aware of e-resources, they make fair use of them for academic and research purposes. It is also essential that for scholars to use the resources, they should be skilled in information and communication technologies (ICTs) applications to gain independent use of various electronic information resources worldwide. It has been observed that scholars of literature and language streams are confronted with various challenges relating to inadequate ICT infrastructure, high cost of the subscription, poor user skills, amongst others, in the use of e-resources. Consequently, this study explores the awareness and usage of electronic information resources among research scholars of literature and language subjects of Banaras Hindu University.

1.2. Faculty of Arts

The Faculty of Arts is the oldest and largest faculty of Banaras Hindu University. It occupies a unique position in the history of Banaras Hindu University. It was founded in 1898 as the Central Hindu College by Annie Besant and became the nucleus from which the Banaras Hindu University grew after its establishment in 1916. It is also popularly recognized as the "Mother Faculty," out of which many other university faculties and

departments grew out. The departments of the Arts faculty can be categorized into three broader categories based on course focus;

- Language and Literature (Arabic, Bengali, English, French, German, Hindi, Pali and Buddhist Studies, Linguistics, Marathi, Persian, Sanskrit, Telugu, and Urdu)
- History, Culture and Philosophy (Ancient Indian History, Culture & Archaeology, History of Arts and Philosophy & Indian Religion)
- Professional and Vocational courses (Journalism and Mass Communication, Library & Information Science and Physical Education)
- There are also three research centers established for focusing on traditional Indian knowledge, culture and language (Malaviya Moolya Anusheelan Kendra, Bhojpuri Adhyan Kendra and Bharat Adhyayan Kendra)

2. Literature review

The importance and wide-ranging scope of electronic resources for general communication, information retrieval and instructional delivery to support teaching and research activities in higher educational institutions is acknowledged worldwide. The literature also shows that many studies have been carried out on e-resources by users worldwide.

Goria (2012) noted that numerous scholarly international e-journals are now accessible in Indian libraries through a consortium approach. On the other hand, every user must be oriented from the latest technologies to maximise e-resources with minimum efforts. The author has described some of the techniques for effective use of e-resources, which are very useful for users, especially academicians and researchers. Madhusudhan (2008) carried out a study to find electronic resources by teachers, students and research scholars of universities and research organisations. 78% of the respondents feel that using the UGC–Infonet e-journals has created a high dependency value on their research work. They needed current article alert services and electronic document supply services.

Dange, et al. (2013) conducted a study on awareness and usage of digital information sources and services by postgraduate students of Kuvempu University. The findings revealed a significant difference between previous and final year students of digital information source awareness, digital information services awareness, and digital information source usage. Also, there is a significant difference between arts, science and education students' digital information source awareness, digital information services awareness, digital information sources usage and digital information services usage. However, there is no significant difference between previous and final year students' digital information services usage, digital information source awareness. There is no significant difference between digital information source usage, digital information services awareness, and digital information services usages of male and female students.

In effect, all the studies reviewed above are implemented to assume that electronic resources' uptake is highly desirable. It leads to increased productivity of work, learning, teaching and research.

3. Objectives

The main objectives of the present study are as follows:

1. To find out the awareness of users about available e-resources.
2. To study the purpose and utilization of e-resources.

3. To find out the frequency of using e-resources.
4. To find out the hindrances and problems faced by the users while accessing and using e-resources.
5. To study the level of satisfaction of users about the availability and coverage of e-resources.
6. To study the preferred format for using e-resources.
7. To study the satisfaction level of users about infrastructure to support the access of e-resources.
8. To suggest suitable recommendations to improve facilities and services related to the use of e-resources.

4. Methodology

Keeping in view the above objectives in mind, a structured questionnaire was prepared to collect data from research scholars in the Faculty of Arts, Banaras Hindu University. The questionnaire contains various questions about the awareness and use of e-resources. For this purpose, an online questionnaire was designed and distributed to the 100 Research Scholars of the literature subjects. Out of 100 research scholars, 82 were responded and the study is based on data received from the filled questionnaire. The data was analyzed and presented in a graphical chart form.

4.1. Limitations

The present study covered the Research scholars of the Faculty of Arts, Banaras Hindu University. The Faculty of Arts includes 21 departments and 3 research centers, but the present study is restricted to the literature subjects only. There are 13 departments based on literature subjects. The data presented in this study is based on the response received from 12 departments. The departments covered in this study are as follows;

Sl. No.	Name of the department	Abbreviation
1.	Department of Arabic	ARB
2.	Department of Bengali	BEN
3.	Department of English	ENG
4.	Department of French Studies	FRE
5.	Department of Foreign Languages (Chinese, Japanese, Sinhalese, Russian, Italian, Spanish and Polish)	FL
6.	Department of German Studies	GER
7.	Department of Hindi	HIN
8.	Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies	PAL
9.	Department of Persian	PER
10.	Department of Telugu	TEL
11.	Department of Sanskrit	SAN
12.	Department of Urdu	URD

Table 1: Departments and their abbreviations

5. Data Analysis

Analysis of data is the ultimate step in the research process. It is the link between raw data and significant results, leading to conclusions. This process of analysis has to be result-oriented.

5.1. Demographic Study

5.1.1. Gender wise distribution

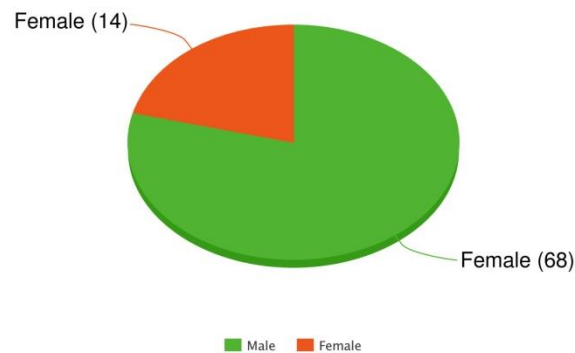


Figure 1: Gender wise distribution

Figure 1 provides an overview of gender distribution from the respondents. The figure shows that the majority of the respondents, 82.93% (N=68), are male, whereas 17.07% (N=14) of respondents are female. The above result shows that female research scholars' participation in this study is less than one third.

5.1.2. Age-wise distribution

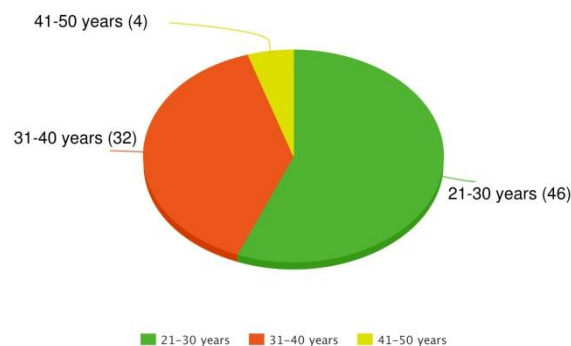


Figure 2: Gender wise distribution

Figure 2 provides the age-wise distribution of the respondents. The figure shows the majority of respondents, 56.10% (N=46) are from the 21-30 year category, 39.02% (N=32) are from the 31-40 years category, and 4.88% (N=4) are from the 41-50 age category. The above result shows that young minds are nowadays more interested in research work than older ones. It may also conclude that most of the e-resources users are from a younger age

5.1.3. Department wise distribution

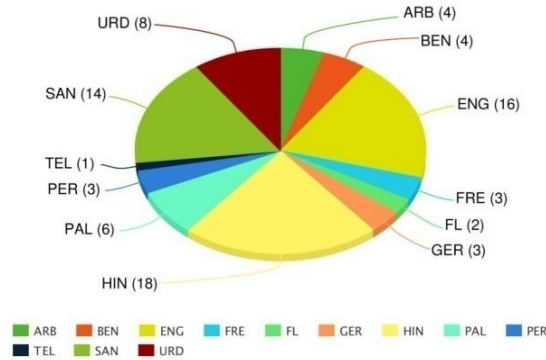


Figure 3: Gender wise distribution

Figure 3 shows the subject wise representation of respondents in the study. The study comprises 12 departments; out of them, the maximum representation of 21.95% (N=18) is from Hindi Literature and the minimum representation of 1.22% (N=1) is from Telugu Literature. The other departments as decreasing order of representation are; English 19.51% (N=16), Sanskrit 17.07% (N=14), Urdu 9.76% (N=8), Pali 7.32% (N=6), Arabic 4.88% (N=4), Bengali 4.88% (N=4), French 3.66% (N=3), German 3.66% (N=3), Persian 3.66% (N=3) and Foreign Language 2.44% (N=2). Surprisingly, research scholars from Hindi literature are more familiar with e-resources than English literature and other foreign languages.

5.2. Purpose of using the Internet

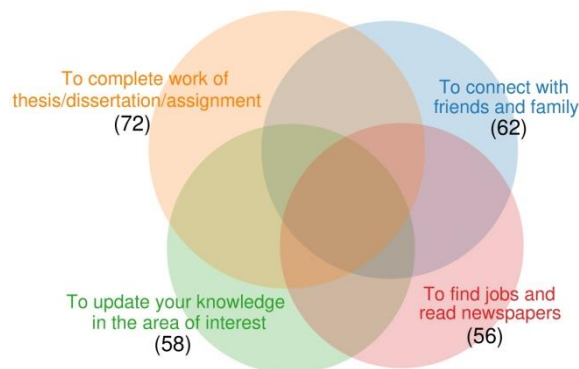


Figure 4: Gender wise distribution

The Internet has a vast amount of information and respondents use it according to their needs. We measured the purpose of using the Internet by permitting them to answer multiple options. Figure 4 revealed that the majority of respondents, 87.80% (N=72), use the Internet for completing their work of thesis/dissertation/assignment, 75.61% (N=62) respondents use to connect with friends and family, 70.73% (N=58) respondents use to update their knowledge in the area of interest and 68.29% (N=56) use it to find jobs and read newspapers. The study also reveals that respondents use the Internet for more than one above mentioned purposes. Most of the respondents use the Internet for more than one purpose and some respondents use it for all four mentioned purposes.

5.3. Awareness of E-resources

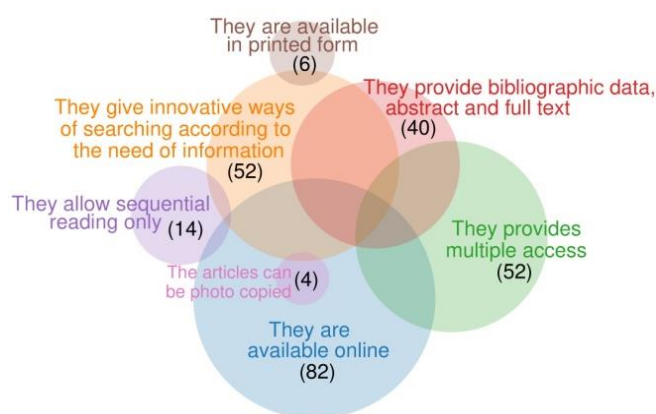


Figure 5: Awareness of E-resources

Figure 5 shows the student's awareness of e-resources. We provide them with eight features of e-resources; out of the 3 were wrong to check their awareness. They were allowed to choose any four options out of eight. The figure shows that most respondents are aware of the features of e-resources, but some respondents opted wrong options too. The 100% (N=82) respondents opted that e-resources are available online, 63.41% (N=52) respondents think they give innovative ways of searching according to the need of information, 63.41% (N=52) respondents said they provide multiple access, 48.78% (N=40) respondents think they provide bibliographic data, abstract and full text. There are some respondents also who were confused about the feature of e-resource. The figure shows 17.07% (N=14) respondents think they allow sequential reading only, 7.32% (N=6) said they are available in printed form and 4.88% (N=4) said the articles could be photocopied. The figure indicated that a proper orientation about using e-resources is needed to increase the usability of e-resources among research scholars of literature disciplines.

5.4. Advantages of E-resources

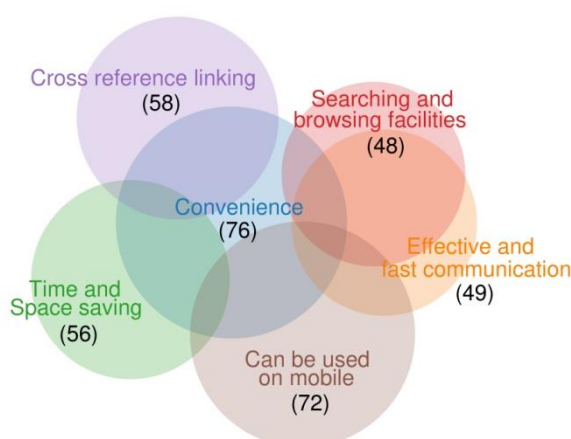


Figure 6: Advantages of E-resources

E-resources provide the facility to use it anytime and anywhere according to the convenience of the users. It is beneficial to utilize free and leisure time. There are many advantages of e-resources and some of them are listed below. The respondents were allowed to choose their favorite advantages of using e-resources and data is presented in figure 6. The majority of respondents 92.68% (N=76) like its convenience, 59.76% (N=49) feel its

Effective and fast communication, 68.29% (N=56) like its Time and Space-saving, 58.54% (N=48) like its Searching and browsing facilities, 70.73 (N=58) like its Cross-reference linking and 87.80% (N=72) likes because it Can be used on mobile.

5.5. Purpose of using E-resources

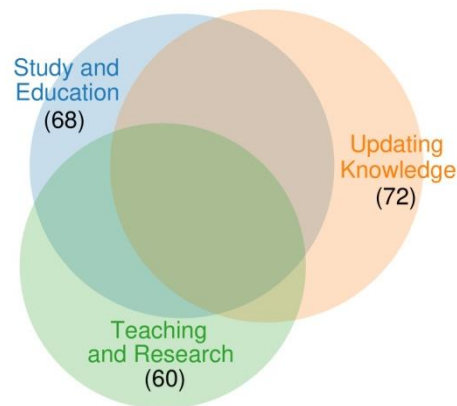


Figure 7: Purpose of using E-resources

E-resources are very popular among academic communities to get help in their studies and research and update their knowledge. Figure 7 shows that the majority of respondents, 87.80% (N=68), use it for updating their knowledge, 82.93% (N=72) respondents use for Study and Education and 73.17% (N=60) use it for getting help in their Teaching and Research. The data shows scholars are using e-resources for their study, teaching, research and update knowledge.

5.6. Frequency of using E-resources

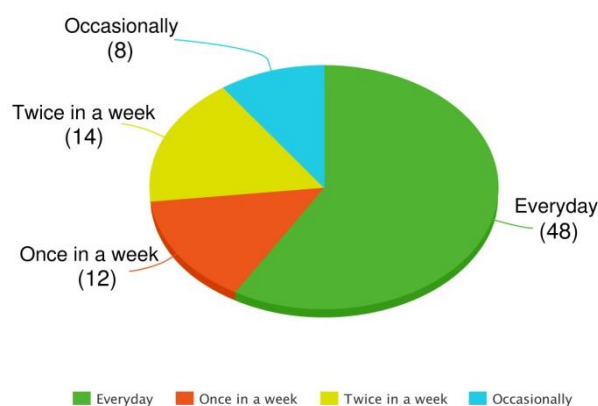


Figure 8: Frequency of using E-resources

E-resources have a vast amount of knowledge and students use it according to their needs. The frequency of using e-resources was measured and data is presented in figure 8. The study revealed that the majority of respondents, 58.54% (N=48), use e-resources daily. There is 17.07% (N=14) respondents use twice in a week, 14.63% (N=12) respondents use once in a week and 9.76% (N=8) respondents use e-resources occasionally.

5.7. Time spend on E-resources

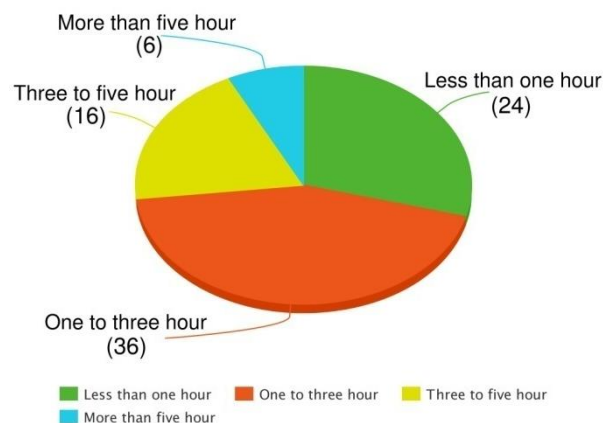


Figure 9: Time spend on E-resources

Academic communities are spending more time on their electronic devices. Thus the time spending on using e-resources is regularly increasing. The time spends on using e-resources is a significant factor for measuring the importance of e-resources. The data represented in figure 9 is depicting the time spending on using e-resources. Regarding duration, almost 43.90% (N=36) of respondents use E-resources, One to three hours per day. 29.27% (N=24) of them use for Less than one hour, 19.51% (N=16) Three to five hours and 7.32% (N=6) respondents use e-resource More than five hours per day.

5.8. Location of access E-resources

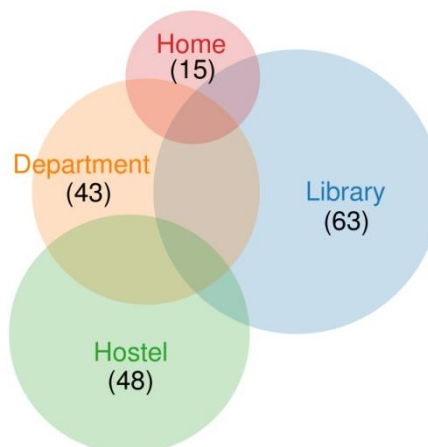


Figure 10: Gender wise distribution

Most of the e-resources are paid, but some are open access. The Paid ones are subscribed by the university and work on IP based subscription. Respondents cannot use them outside of campus, whereas open access is free for all and respondents can use them from anywhere. We analyzed respondents preferred location for accessing e-resources by allowing them to choose more than one option. The study reveals that most of the respondents, 76.83% (N=63), access e-resources from the library. 58.54% (N=48) access from Hostel, 52.44%

(N=43) from Department and 18.29% (N=15) respondents access e-resources from Home. The respondent can not access paid e-resources from home; thus, the home users are very few.

5.9. Devices used to access E-resources

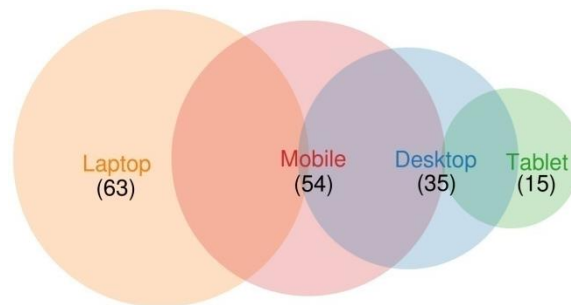


Figure 11: Devices used to access E-resources

There are many devices by which respondents can access e-resources. Respondents use e-resource by PC, Laptop, Tablet or Mobile. Many respondents have a single device, whereas many have respondents use more than one device to access them. The figure 11 shows that most of respondents 76.83% (N=63) use Laptop, 65.85% (N=54) Mobile, 42.68% (N=35) Desktop and 17.07% (N=14) respondents use their Tablet to access e-resources

5.10. Restriction of Usage of E-resources

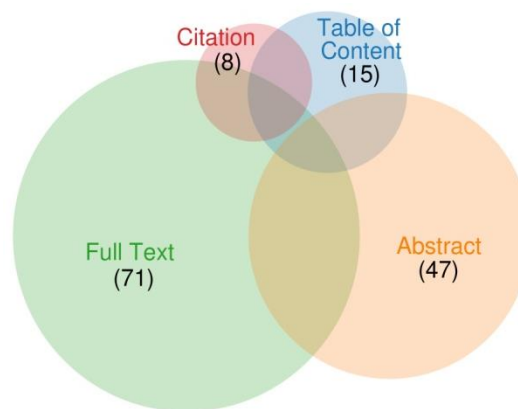


Figure 12: Restriction of Usage of E-resources

Respondents can use e-resources as per their requirements. Some respondents use the only table of content for the literature review and some use abstracts to find papers of their subject field. Many respondents use the only citation, whereas most of the respondents prefer to read the full text. Figure 12 shows that the majority of respondents, 86.59% (N=71), prefer to access the full text, whereas 57.32% (N=47) respondents like to read abstract. 18.29% (N=15) respondents use the content table, whereas 9.76% (N=8) respondents use citations.

5.11. Awareness of Google Scholar

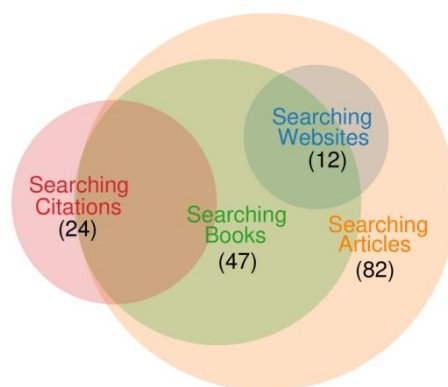


Figure 13: Awareness of Google Scholar

Google Scholar is a freely accessible web search engine that indexes the full text, citations and patents. We asked respondents about the awareness of google scholar. We provide the four features in which one is not related to google scholar's feature. Figure 13 shows that respondents are aware that it is used for searching for articles. 57.32% (N=47) are aware that it is used for searching books, 29.27% (N=24) are aware that it is used for searching citations. 14.63% (N=12) of respondents opted that it is used to search websites that mean they are confused between google scholar and google search engine.

5.12. Awareness of E-resources in the subject field

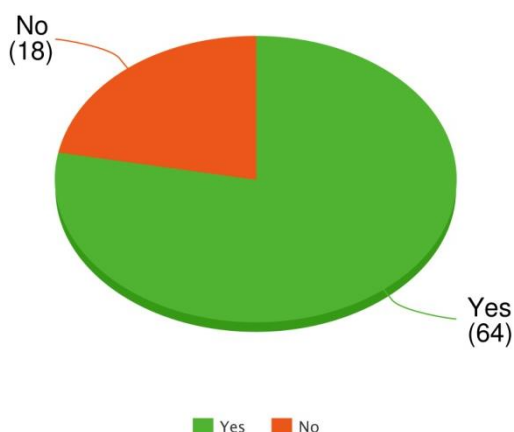


Figure 14: Awareness of E-resources in the subject field

The literature and language students mostly depend on traditional print information sources. They are generally not aware of the e-resources of their subject field. We asked them about the awareness of e-resources of their concern subject. Figure 14 shows that most of the respondents, 78.05% (N=64) accept that they are aware of their subject, whereas 21.95% (N=18) deny this.

5.13. Awareness of E-journals in the subject field

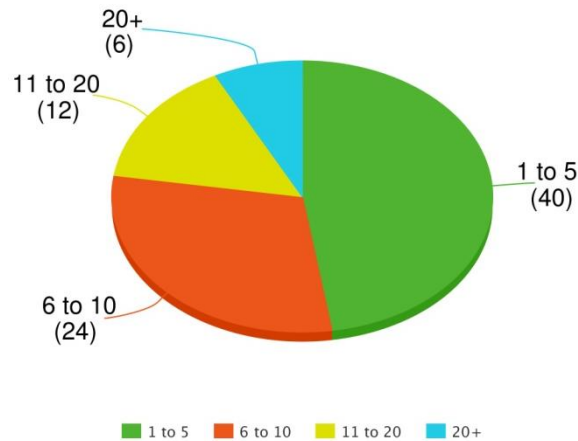


Figure 15: Awareness of E-journals in the subject field

It is assumed that most literature students are aware of the e-journals available in their concerned subjects. We asked respondents to mark the numbers of online journals they know in their subjects. Most of the respondents, 48.78% (N=40) know 1 to 5 online journals, 29.27% (N=24) know 6 to 10 online journals. 14.63% (N=12) respondents are aware of 11 to 20, and only 7.32% (N=6) respondents are aware of more than 20 online journals of their concerned subjects.

5.14. The preferred access point(s) to search an E-resource

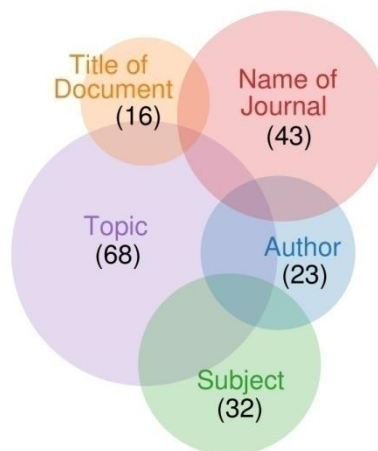


Figure 16: The preferred access point(s) to search an E-resource

The e-resources provide a feature of searching sources by different access points. The users can find their required paper by using the different access points. We measured respondents' preferred access points of searching documents online and the data is presented in figure 16. Most of the respondents, 82.93% (N=68) prefer searching documents by topic, 52.44% (N=43) prefer searching by journal name, 39.02% (N=32) prefer searching subject whereas 28.05% (N=23) respondents prefer to search by author name and 19.51% (N=16) prefer by searching the title of the document.

5.15. Difficulties of accessing E-resources

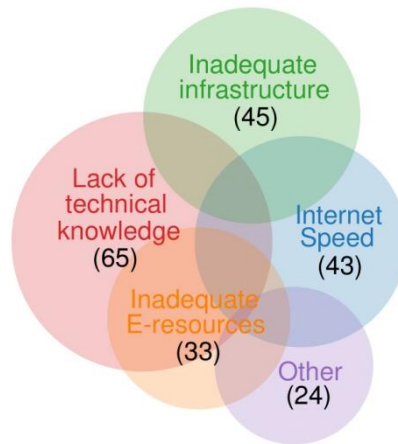


Figure 17: Difficulties of accessing E-resources

E-resources are very convenient to use, but they required little knowledge of searching and use of them. We observed the problem facing by the respondents while accessing. The study reveals that 79.27% (N=65) respondents lack technical knowledge, while 54.88% (N=45) respondents do not have adequate infrastructure. 52.44% (N=43) face low internet speed problems, while 39.02% (N=) respondents do not find adequate e-resources. 29.27% (N=24) respondents faced those problems that were not mentioned in our options and choose others.

5.16. Perception of E-resources and print documents

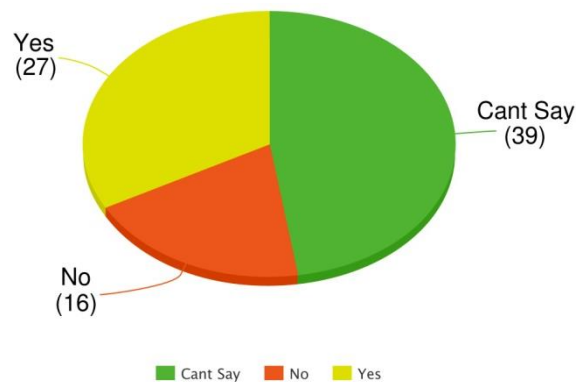


Figure 18: Perception of E-resources and print documents

Earlier studies reveal that nowadays, respondents prefer e-resources over print sources. The respondents were asked to compare both formats and provide their opinion about the preferred format. Most of the respondents, 47.56% (N=39), said they could not compare both formats because they have unique characteristics. 32.93% (N=27) respondents feel e-resources are better than print format, whereas 19.51% (N=16) denied that.

5.17. Perception about training assistance to access E-resources



Figure 19: Gender wise distribution

The use of E-resource requires proper training and assistance. The libraries must provide better training and assistance to its users to increase usability. The respondents were asked about their opinion about the assistance provided by their library for accessing e-resources. Most of the respondents, 62.20% (N=51) admitted that their library does not provide better assistance, whereas 37.80% (N=31) respondents said their library provides better assistance.

6. Conclusion

6.1. Awareness of users about available e-resources.

The study shows that most of the respondents are aware of the features of e-resources. They are aware that e-resources are available online and give innovative ways of searching according to the need for information. It provides multiple access and provides bibliographic data, abstract and full text. There are some respondents also who were confused about the feature of e-resource. Thus the training and awareness program must be conducted to make them aware because literature and language students are mostly dependent on traditional print information sources. Three fourth of the respondents are aware of e-resources in their subject.

6.2. Purpose and utilization of e-resources

E-resources are very popular among academic communities to get help in their studies and research. The majority of respondents use e-resources to update their knowledge, Study and Education and get help in their Teaching and Research. The data shows scholars are using e-resources for their study, teaching, research and update knowledge. E-resources provide the facility to use it anytime and anywhere according to the convenience of the users. The respondents like its convenience, Effective and fast communication, Time and Space-saving, Searching and browsing facility and Cross-reference linking. They prefer e-resources because it can be used on their mobile phones.

6.3. The frequency of using e-resources

E-resources have a vast amount of knowledge and users can use it according to their needs. The study revealed that the majority of respondents use e-resources daily. There are very few scholars who used e-resources twice and once in a week. Some scholars admit that they use e-resources occasionally.

6.4. The hindrances and problems faced by the users while accessing and using e-resources

E-resources are very convenient to use, but it required little knowledge of access. The findings reveal that a lack of technical knowledge is the biggest problem. Therefore, the lack of adequate infrastructure, low internet speed problems, and lack of adequate e-resources are other challenges. There are many other difficulties also faced by the respondents.

6.5. Level of satisfaction of users about the availability and coverage of e-resources

The study revealed that most of the scholars are aware of the e-journals available in their concerned subjects. Almost fifty percent of the respondents only know one to five online journals in their subject. One third knows six to ten online journals. The findings show very few of them aware of more than ten online journals in their subject. Thus the awareness program is necessary for maximum utilization of the e-resources.

6.6. The preferred format for using e-resources

The e-resources provide a feature of searching for information by using different access points. The findings show that most of the respondents prefer searching for documents by topic. The other preferred searching points are journal name, subject, author name and title of the document. The data reveal that majority of users like both formats of resources. Some users find e-resources better than print forms, whereas few could not.

6.7. Satisfaction level of users about infrastructure to support the access of e-resources

The use of E-resource requires proper training and assistance. The libraries must provide better training and assistance to its users to increase usability. The finding shows that the library does not provide better assistance and training about using e-resources.

6.8. Recommendations to improve facilities and services related to the use of e-resources.

The finding shows that libraries should improve the facilities and services to their users. The libraries must focus on acquiring more online resources to be made available for the maximum number of users. A single window should also be developed to find their required content at a single click. The library also makes a helpline desk to solve e-resources related issues. Awareness is essential for maximum utilization of the e-resources so, libraries must conduct awareness programs for newly admitted students every year.

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